



*Town of Walpole  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

**PERSONNEL BOARD**

Michael McGrath, Chair  
Julie Lowre, Vice-Chair  
Jane Bergen  
Larry Pitman  
Jon Rockwood

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**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9, 2021**

The Personnel Board met on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 beginning at 6:00pm via Zoom. The following members were present:

Michael McGrath, Chair  
Jane Bergen  
Larry Pitman  
Jon Rockwood

Julie Lowre, Vice Chair (NOT PRESENT)

Also Present:  
Patrick Shield, Assistant Town Administrator  
Kristine Brown, Benefits Coordinator

**Agenda Items:**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair McGrath called the Personnel Board meeting to order at 6:03 pm

**PERSONNEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

Assistant Town Administrator Patrick Shield shared the updated organizational chart with the Personnel Board members. He went through the chart department by department. He proposed that we keep all of the positions on the chart but get rid of the names to make it easier to maintain.

Mr. McGrath felt the organizational chart was a helpful tool and agreed with removing the names but keeping the positions.

Mr. Rockwood wanted to know if there was significance to the dotted lines that were directed from the Select Board to the Fire & Police Chief.

Mr. Shield explained that both of those positions are appointed by the Select Board. He stated that he would be making some final adjustments and send out the final version in the next week or two.

#### **PERSONNEL BOARD TOWN REPORT SUBMISSION:**

Mr. Shield stated that Jon Rockwood sent over some comments & revisions to the initial Personnel Board Town Report submission. He shared Jon's comments on the screen. The biggest change being "striking a balance of protecting the taxpayer & ensuring that employees are receiving fair wages"

The Board members were happy with the Town Report submission.

Mr. Shield stated that he would make the revisions and include the final copy in the Town Report.

#### **APPROVAL OF PERSONNEL ACTION REQUESTS:**

The PAR's were reviewed.

Mr. Pitman had a question regarding Veteran's Agent, Jon Cogan – the PAR said resignation but it was mentioned previously that Jon Cogan retired.

Mr. Shield explained that Jon has not gone to the retirement board as of date. Therefore as of current time he is considered a resignation. He went on to explain that we are having a tough time filling this position. Jon did a bang up job when he was the Veteran's Agent, finding a replacement has been challenging. We have conducted interviews and will continue to interview for this position until we find the right candidate. We have high expectations for this position. I do want to thank the Council of Aging who have been helping out while the position is vacated. They have been doing an awesome job.

Mr. Pitman questioned under Police Sergeant, what is a "Temporary Promotion". What does that mean?

Mr. Shield explained that one of the patrol sergeants has been out on leave or injury. In the absence of him being out on regular patrol, one of the patrol officers was appointed by the Select Board to be the temporary sergeant to cover that shift.

Motion moved by Mr. Pitman to approve the PAR's and allow Mr. Shield to sign on the Board's behalf, seconded by Ms. Bergen

#### **Roll call vote:**

<i>Michael McGrath:</i>	YES
<i>Jane Bergen:</i>	YES
<i>Larry Pitman:</i>	YES
<i>Jon Rockwood:</i>	YES

**Vote 4-0-0 Approved**

**UPDATE FROM TOWN ADMINISTRATION RE: MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE – THURSDAY  
FEBRUARY 18<sup>th</sup>:**

Mr. Shield mentioned the Personnel Board is scheduled to meet with the Finance Committee on Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, to discuss the 1.75 cost of living increase & the Juneteenth Holiday. We would like someone from the Personnel Board to be available to discuss this with the Finance Committee & answer any questions.

Mr. McGrath said that either he or Julie Lowre would attend.

Mr. Pitman stated he would be happy to go if Mike or Julie were unable to make it. He also had a question regarding last night's Finance Committee meeting. There was a discussion about Employee Contracts. It was mentioned at last night's meeting, that they are available for public view. Can you share this information with the board? There are several contracts out there with some of the senior employees. Can we see those contracts, so we can understand what is going on?

Mr. Shield explained that Town Administrator Jim Johnson was going to put together a memo with all of this information for the Finance Committee. He will make sure that the Personnel Board receives this memo as well.

Mr. Pitman wanted to know if the Board could review the contracts. He was curious regarding the structure, are they all the same? The Personnel Board was not involved in the process. There was talk about legal opinion saying that it is not required for us to be a part of that. Is there any way to resurface or reprint that? I don't recall or remember that, it was probably a while ago.

Mr. Shield stated that to Jim's knowledge, the contracts are structured the way they were when Michael Boynton was Administrator. The question that had come up at last night's Finance Committee meeting was regarding the legal opinion that gives the Select Board authority to enter into employment contracts with select individuals. He would make sure the Board receives a copy of the contracts & of the legal language.

Mr. Rockwood wanted to know if there was any discussion regarding where Town Meeting would take place this spring. Is the plan to have it outside again?

Mr. Shield explained that the Select Board has closed the Town Meeting Warrant. The moderators are indicating that it will be held on the Saturday before it usually is. Spring Town Meeting is normally held on the first Monday in May. Now it will be on the first Saturday in May (May 1<sup>st</sup>) on the Walpole High School Football field. The rain date is the next day.

Mr. Rockwood wanted to know if having the Town Meeting on the football field has gone well previously.

Mr. Shield stated from his perspective it has gone OK.

Ms. Bergen & Mr. McGrath have attended the previous Town Meetings on the football field and they both felt it went great.

Mr. Shield explained that the sound was the most difficult part but Doug Betschart from IT has done a great job with this.

Ms. Bergen felt the set up was great and it was very thoughtful. Water was provided to all that attended. Everything was really nicely done.

Mr. McGrath said that sunblock was also a nice touch.

Mr. Shield said that to help ensure votes were counted properly, each Town Meeting Member was given a green & red card which helped give the moderator a visual cue as to which way the members was voting, so if there was any question about the voice voting, the cards could help.

### **MINUTES:**

#### **a. Approval of Minutes from November 10, 2020**

Mr. Shield shared Mr. Pitman's revisions to the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes.

Mr. Pitman, the yellow is to delete and the red is to add. It was just involving paraphrasing what I was saying in a sense, as I recall.

Motion moved by Mr. Pitman to approve the November 10, 2020 meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Ms. Bergen.

#### **Roll call vote:**

*Mike McGrath: YES*

*Jane Bergen: YES*

*Larry Pitman: YES*

*Jon Rockwood: YES*

**Vote 4-0-0 Approved**

#### **b. Approval of Minutes from December 12, 2020**

Motion moved by Mr. Pitman to approve the December 12, 2020 meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Bergen.

#### **Roll call vote:**

*Mike McGrath: Abstained because he did not attend that meeting*

*Jane Bergen: YES*

*Larry Pitman: YES*

*Jon Rockwood: YES*

**Vote 3-0-1 Approved**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Shield wanted to know if the Board would like to have their next meeting on Tuesday, March 9, 2021.

Mr. McGrath said that would be fine but if there was nothing for the board to review they would move it to a later date.

With there being nothing else to discuss

Motion moved by Mr. Pitman to adjourn the Personnel Board meeting at 6:36 pm, seconded by Ms. Bergen.

**Roll call vote:**

*Mike McGrath:* YES

*Jane Bergen:* YES

*Larry Pitman:* YES

*Jon Rockwood:* YES

**Vote 4-0-0 Approved**

Respectfully submitted,

Kristine Brown

Minutes approved on: **May 11, 2021**